

VZCZCXYZ0008
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHIN #0116 0290851
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 290851Z JAN 10
FM AIT TAIPEI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3236
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 9673
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 1058

UNCLAS AIT TAIPEI 000116

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/TC, EAP/P, EAP/PD - THOMAS HAMM
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-CHINA-TAIWAN RELATIONS, OBAMA

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage January 29 on President Ma Ying-jeou's visit in Honduras; the debut of Apple's iPad; the aftermath of a Taiwan T-34C trainer plane crash; and the soaring land prices in Taipei City. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an editorial in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" discussed a recently-published Congressional Research Service report on China's naval modernization. The article said, judging from this report, the general strategic direction of the United States is to safeguard the common interests of the democratic countries in the Asia-Pacific region. A column in the KMT-leaning "China Times" discussed President Barack Obama using the Internet to broadcast his State of the Union address live. The article said it appears that Obama is going to use the Internet as a weapon both diplomatically and domestically. End summary.

¶2. U.S.-China-Taiwan Relations

"The United States' General Strategic Direction: Safeguarding the Common Interests of Democratic Countries"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 680,000] editorialized (1/29):

"A U.S. Congressional Research Service (CRS) report said: The near-term focus of China's military modernization is to address the Taiwan issue, and as a result, China wants [its military] to develop the capability so that it can act as a so-called anti-access force, which can deter U.S. intervention in a conflict involving Taiwan. This analytical report on 'China's naval capabilities' also pointed out that China's military buildup has in fact demonstrated greater ambition that has caused the United States and other nations to align their military deployments in the Asia-Pacific with China. ...

Ma Ying-jeou's China-tilting remarks and practices have obviously aroused grave concerns in the United States. Some people asserted that since Ma wants to tilt toward China, the United States should consider stopping its arms sales to Taiwan, removing Taiwan from its list of allies in Asia and, further, abolishing the Taiwan Relations Act. An article published not long ago in the 'Foreign Affairs' journal regarding Taiwan moving toward Finlandization was a result of [such a viewpoint]. ...

"Another viewpoint, however, said that Ma disregards Taiwan's security and has been deliberately trying to incorporate Taiwan into China's sphere of influence. As a result, Washington should be fully prepared to come up with an effective resolution for the U.S. military, based on the scenario that the Ma administration has absolutely no motive or capability to resist China's invasion, in case any conflict break out in the Taiwan Strait. The afore-mentioned CRS report analyzing China's naval capabilities comes closer to such a viewpoint. In fact, such a perspective is not only correct but also consistent with the common interests of the United States, Taiwan and the island's neighboring countries. Of course, such an assertion cannot be viewed as [a move to] 'safeguard Taiwan' but should be interpreted as [an effort to] 'safeguard the common interests of democratic countries.' ...

"... Ma's confusing national identity has also caused the United States, when making its decisions about arms sales to Taiwan, to consider how to strengthen Taiwan's defense capabilities to the extent that it is at least capable of resisting China's invasion until the moment of international intervention. On the other hand, however, Washington needs to take precautions so that the advanced weapons [it provides to Taiwan] will not be misused by the Ma administration that they become the 'dowries' when Taiwan 'throws itself at the Chinese communists' one day. Nevertheless, the United States has at least demonstrated its willpower to 'help defend Taiwan.' ..."

13. Obama

"Obama Wants to Use the Internet to Fix Foreign and Domestic Problems"

The "International Lookout" column in the KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 120,000] wrote (1/29):

"The U.S. President has delivered his first-ever State of the Union address since he assumed office. What is new was that, amid his dropping approval ratings, he tried to create his new personal image via the Internet; his speech was broadcast live via the CitizenTube channel of YouTube and the latest iPhone application software. ... It appears that the Obama administration is not only using the Internet as an attack weapon diplomatically but is also going to use it as a weapon to maintain his prestige domestically. This is already an ironclad fact, which will not be changed anymore, because other than this weapon, Obama really cannot find any other more effective means to maintain his authority. ..."

STANTON